NIMPKISH LAKE PROVINCIAL PARK

PURPOSE STATEMENT AND ZONING PLAN

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Approved by:

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Date: Mar 31/03

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Primary Role

The **primary** role of Nimpkish Lake Park is to protect ecologically significant habitat of two under-represented ecosystem types -- the Northern Island Mountains Ecosection and the Coastal Western Hemlock biogeoclimatic zone, including three of its variants. With 3,950 hectares, the park protects almost the entire Tlakwa Creek watershed, part of the Nimpkish Lake shoreline, and mostly mature second growth conifer forest with some old growth along the lake and eastern slopes of Karmutzen Mountain. The forests of amabilis fir, Douglas-fir, western hemlock, and yellow cedar have high ecological value as they contribute to large and small predator-prey systems, provide winter range habitat for deer, and have high potential nesting and foraging habitat for the red-listed marbled murrelet and a subspecies of northern goshawk. The park also protects high quality salmonid spawning habitat in the lowest reaches of Tlakwa Creek, contains examples of karst topography, and protects two blue-listed alpine plants.

Secondary Role

The **secondary** role is to offer backcountry wilderness recreation opportunities and to provide a scenic viewscape from the Vancouver Island Highway. The steep forested slopes of the Karmutzen Range that frame Nimpkish Lake contain opportunities for backcountry camping, hiking and mountaineering, as well as guided hunting and angling. Although the lake itself is excluded from the park, opportunities exist for swimming, windsurfing, boating, freshwater fishing, and kayaking/canoeing when the water is calm. Across the lake from the park on the southeastern shore, camping facilities are available in the Nimpkish Lake Recreation Site (Canfor), which is a well-maintained recreation site with picnic tables, a boat launch, and walk-in campsites.

Management Issues

Known Management Issue	Response
Lack of knowledge of rare elements and cultural values	➢ Gather inventory data on park and park values. ➢ Undertake a cultural inventory and traditional use study in conjunction with First Nations.
Impact of adjacent forest harvesting activities on adjacent private land, botanical harvesting, and the incompleteness of the watershed on natural and recreational values	➢ Work with Canfor and Ministry of Forests to address adjacency issues such as siltation, access, blowdown. ➢ Provide signage and educational materials to ensure private resource harvesters are aware of park boundaries, and potential impacts of their activities.
Lack of awareness and boundary identification	➢ Install boundary signs. ➢ Encourage Ministry of Transportation to develop viewpoint on Highway 19 with interpretive signs.
Boating on Nimpkish Lake as a safety concern	➢ Provide information and signage regarding hazards of water travel on Nimpkish Lake.

Zoning

Wilderness Recreation Zone – covers the entire park (3,949.8 hectares). The objective of this zone is to protect scenic values and to provide backcountry recreation opportunities in a largely undisturbed natural environment. It is designed for large natural areas where ecological processes are uninfluenced by human activity, and where there is a low level of use confined to specific primitive facilities, which are not generally visited on a day use basis. Trails and minimal facilities that support the backcountry recreation use may be developed, while minimizing use impacts on the wildlife and wilderness values of the area.

Conservation

Representation - ecosection	☒	Nimpkish Lake Park contributes 7.4% to the overall representation of the Northern Island Mountains Ecosection (NIM), making it 4th out of 18 protected areas that contribute to its representation. NIM is under represented provincially at 9.1%.
- biogeoclimatic subzone/variant	☒	Nimpkish Lake Park contributes about 6% to the representation of CWHxm2, making it 3rd out of 30 protected areas that contribute to its representation. CWHxm2 is under represented in the protected areas system (PAS) at 4.1%. It also makes minimal contributions to the representation of CWHvm2 (0.8%) and CWhvm1 (0.7%), which are under represented in the PAS at 8.7% and 7% respectively. Minimal contribution (0.3%) to the representation of the well-represented MHmm1 (16% protected).
Special Features	☒	Old growth forest habitat, watershed, deer winter range, fish habitat, and karst topography
Rare/Endangered Values	☒	*Blue-listed* plants lance-fruited draba and western hedysarum that inhabit rock faces and scree slopes. *Blue-listed* northern pygmy owl, *swarthi* subspecies, adjacent to park boundary on southwest side of the lake. High potential habitat for *red-listed* marbled murrelet and a subspecies of northern goshawk, and two *blue-listed* fish species.
Scientific/Research Opportunities	☒	Predator-prey systems, ungulate winter range, old growth-dependent species, anadromous fish

Recreation

Representation backcountry	☒	Wilderness activities
destination	☒	Mountaineering and camping in a wilderness setting
travel corridor	☒	Viewscape from highway corridor
local recreation	☒	Swimming, windsurfing, and freshwater fishing
Special Opportunities	☐	None known at this time
Education/Interpretation Opportunities	☒	Opportunity for offsite interpretation at the viewpoint on the Highway

Cultural Heritage

Representation	☒	Post-contact history. First Nation traditional use with nearby cross-island trade route from Broughton Strait to Nootka Sound or to Kyuquot Sound.
Special Feature	☒	Early logging railway with remnants along upper Tlakwa Creek. Nearby culturally modified trees and canoe-log trees.

Other Management Considerations

Other Designations	☐	Not Applicable
Relationship to other PAs	☒	Part of a system of protected areas in the north end of Vancouver Island
Co-operative Management Arrangements	☐	Not Applicable
Partnerships	☐	Not Applicable
Vulnerability	☒	Scenic and natural values are vulnerable to adjacent logging, development, resource users in area and botanical harvesting. Ecosystem integrity is vulnerable without protection of entire watershed and significant lake and marsh habitat.
Relationship to other Strategies	☒	Designated as a result of recommendations in the Vancouver Island Land Use Plan

Area: 3,949.8 hectares

Date of establishment: July 12, 1995

Zoning Map - Nimpkish Lake Provincial Park

Projection: Albers Equal Areas
Datum: NAD83

Wilderness Recreation
Protected Area Boundary

0 2
km

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